



Gloucestershire Junior County Hockey guide for parents and carers

Welcome to Junior County Hockey in Gloucestershire! We've had feedback that it can be hard to understand what happens, when and how it all fits together, so we have created this guide to answer as many of these questions as we can.

County Hockey (CH)

Junior County (Sub Area) Hockey is the new England Hockey name for junior county hockey programmes previously known Academy Centres (AC) and Development Centres (DC). Junior County Hockey will continue to provide an exciting and aspirational representative opportunity for the U13-U17 age groups that provides a different experience to regular club or school hockey.

It is a standalone development experience, focused on preparing for and competing in representative teams. It is one route to progress to the next stage of the England Hockey player pathway which is called the Talent Academy. Players can be nominated for the Talent Academy and/or England age group trials by their school, club or county. For Gloucestershire, the closest Talent Academies (at the moment) are Stourport, Bath and Oxford.

For some players Junior County Hockey will be one of several talent foundation opportunities they take up and it is regarded as steppingstone towards both elite domestic and international performance hockey. For others it will be the pinnacle of their representative hockey and hopefully a steppingstone to life-long enjoyment and involvement in the sport. Both these outcomes are worthy aims and valuable to the long-term development of hockey.

At Gloucestershire Hockey Association (GHA) we aim to provide excellent coaching in a challenging and supportive environment, to help our county players to reach their potential and enjoy hockey for life by providing:

- exciting and aspirational representative hockey for the U13-U17 age groups
- a different experience to regular club or school hockey
- opportunities to play indoor hockey
- opportunities for aspiring junior umpires and coaches to develop their skills alongside more experienced umpires and coaches

Not all counties start at U13, starting instead at U14, but we believe that players benefit from starting at U13 through increased coaching and match play and so we support this age group too. As not all counties work this way, the number of counties available to play against is lower than at other age groups.

How it works

The details may vary from year to year, but the timetable is broadly as follows:

Time	Event
End of season – March / April	Clubs and schools nominate up to 8 U12 players with the most potential, for training sessions in March/April, in readiness for the U13 squad trials in September. This gives us more time to look at players joining the player pathway and provide coaching.
Start of season – September / October	County trials, typically spread over 2 sessions with a Junior County Hockey squad of around 20 and a Development Squad of around 8 selected per age group.
November to March	Training for both squads. Junior County Hockey squads will also play representative matches from November and benefit from indoor training.
March	County age group tournament.

All lead coaches are suitably qualified and experienced, with a current first aid certificate, relevant Safeguarding certificate and DBS certificate.

Expected standards

It is an honour to represent any county and we expect the following from our players:

- Be on time
- Work hard in every training session or match – you can always improve
- Listen to your coaches
- Be respectful to yourself and everyone around you
- Be proud to represent your county and enjoy it!

Administration

Administration is handled through the England Hockey Player Pathway System (PPS) https://www.playerpathway.englishockey.co.uk/members/sign_in

This is a squad management tool which allows us to manage which players are in which squads, training schedules, match details and payments. It is far from perfect, but works and is the only management system we use. It also allows direct communication with coaches (there is a blue button for this on the website). The player pathway system contains the schedule of training and matches for each

player. The GHA calendar ([link here](#)) contains the schedule for all players and this is maintained and administered by the GHA Junior Coordinators and coaches.

Frequently asked questions

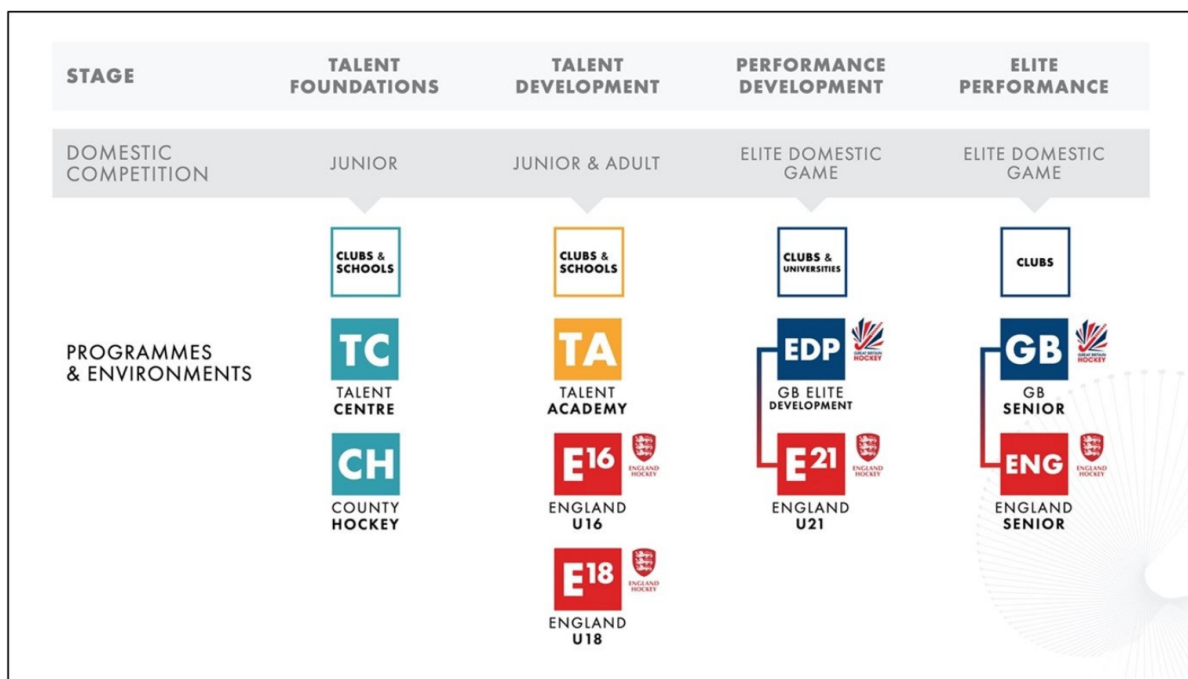
The questions we get asked most frequently are:

#	Question	Answer
1	What if my child wasn't nominated by their club or school and I think they should have been?	Ask your club or school why this is
2	What if my child wasn't selected as I expected?	Ask your club or school why this is
3	What if my child is injured and cannot attend trials?	Speak to the GHA coach to agree an approach
4	What if I need help with the player pathway system?	Contact player-pathway@glos-ha.org.uk
5	What about kit?	Players should not wear school and club kit to trials. Those players selected for Junior County Hockey will be eligible to buy a GHA shirt and hoody.
6	What is the difference between Junior County Hockey and Development squads?	Junior County Hockey is the squad of players selected to represent the county in matches. The Development squad is where players of high potential are invited to join County Hockey training. Players can and do move between squads, based on feedback from the coaches.
7	What fees are there?	There is a fee for trials and a fee for the season to cover the costs of pitch hire, umpires and coaches. Match fees are included in these costs. These are all payable through the Player Pathway System.

England Hockey Talent Development system



Structure Of The Talent System



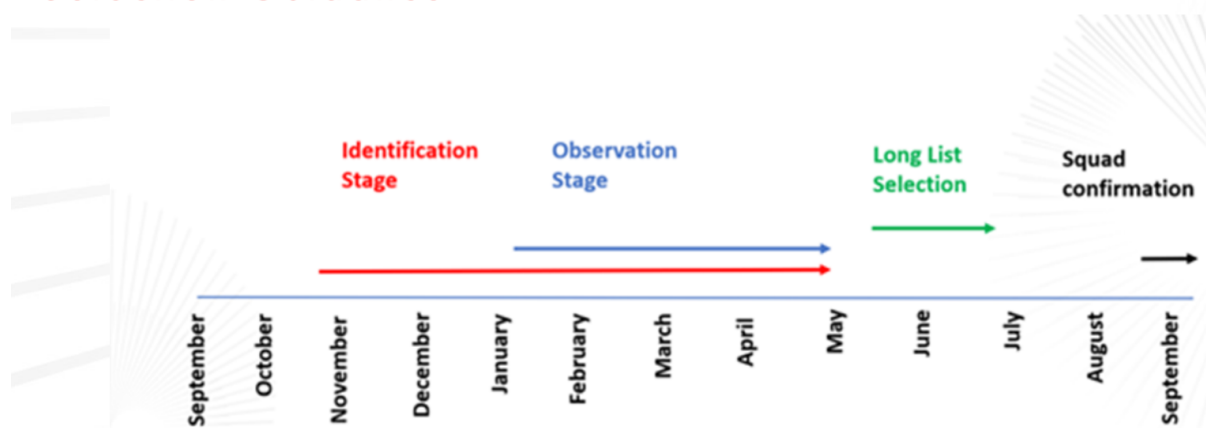
Talent Academies (TA)

Talent Academies are intended for the highest potential 15 to 18-year-old players. There will be multiple opportunities most weeks for high-quality coaching and training through a combination of dedicated sessions and integration with other activity delivered by the host.

Every Talent Academy will have a squad of players selected through a robust process based on the England Hockey Player Profile. Players cannot play for both their County and a Talent Academy. It will cost around £1,000 per player for the year at a Talent Academy.

There is an annual cycle for TA selection which starts in November for TA squad selection the following September:

Talent Academy Identification & Selection Guidance



Typically, the identification stage has 2- 4 open assessment events – clubs, schools and counties can nominate for these events. Those with potential for the following season will be invited to come for observation (playing and training) across 3 -5 different events. A down selection is then made in the summer for a small number of players to be identified for the long list (around 25 boys and 25 girls). Final confirmation of the TA squad is made in September.

There are currently 21 Talent Academies, with those nearest to Gloucestershire highlighted in yellow:

- Beeston
- Cambridge
- Durham University
- Exeter University
- East Grinstead
- Guildford
- Hampstead and Westminster
- Holcombe
- Old Loughtonians
- Oxford Hawks
- Reading
- Sevenoaks
- Stourport
- Surbiton
- Team Bath Buccaneers
- Timperley
- Wimbledon
- EH Birmingham
- EH North West
- EH South Coast
- EH Yorkshire

Talent Centres (TC)

A Talent Centre club is a club that provides high quality provision for players at early talent development level (Talent Foundations). This provision will be embedded within the club's junior programme. Talent Centre accreditation recognises the quality of a club's talent development environment and provision, not individual players. In other words, this is a club that has been verified by England Hockey to be at a certain standard – this does not necessarily mean that it is any better than a club that has not been verified.

More details can be found at:

www.englishockey.co.uk/play/talent-system